

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Lung. Clinical Physiology and Pulmonary Function Tests.** By J. H. COMROE, R. E. FORSTER, A. B. DUBOIS, W. A. BRISCOE and E. CARLSEN. (Pp. viii + 219; 57 figures. 40s.; \$5.50.) Chicago: The Year Book Publishers. (Distributed in United Kingdom by Interscience Publishers, Ltd.) 1955.

Up to quite recent times the physiology of the lungs was rarely considered in relation to pulmonary disease, but in the last 10 years there has been a greater interest in clinical pulmonary physiology and the application of lung function tests in the field of thoracic surgery. Unfortunately most treatises on pulmonary physiology are written for physiologists and are too complex for the ordinary doctor or medical student. In this monograph the authors explain the basic facts of pulmonary physiology in a way that the clinician can understand. The mode of presentation is designed for easy reading and there are many illustrations, most of which are schematic and self-explanatory. By confining all the mathematical figures and equations to the end, the reader is able to grasp the meaning without having to absorb the proof, unless he so desires.

The book is divided into three sections. The first describes pure physiology and the theories of various tests of pulmonary function. The authors stress the importance of ventilation, especially alveolar, as opposed to respiration, devoting 37 pages to this important aspect and point out that uneven ventilation of the lung can lead to pulmonary insufficiency even though the total air movement seems adequate. In the second section the application of various pulmonary function tests is discussed and a series of case histories are presented, showing how these tests are of value. The third section has a valuable glossary of physiological terms and definitions and contains all the data and equations regarding the theoretical considerations of ventilation and blood flow, as well as much of the simple physics of gases and liquids.

Although only 219 pages, this book contains all the facts that the average specialist in the thoracic field needs to know about pulmonary physiology. It is not merely a book to have on the shelf, but should be in the pocket.

**Pädiatrischer Röntgenatlas.** By M. A. LASSRICH, R. PRÉVÔT and K. H. SCHÄFER. Edited by K. H. Schäfer. (Pp. xii + 333; 700 figures. DM. 115.—) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1955.

This volume of diagnostic paediatric x-ray pictures comes more than 20 years after the last German textbook of radiology. During this time, not only has our knowledge increased, but the ability both to take and to reproduce radiographs of the body in health and disease has increased greatly.

The authors of this *Pädiatrischer Röntgenatlas*, which comes from Hamburg and honours the 70th birthday of Professor Hans Kleinschmidt, have the inestimable advantage that the highest class paper has been used for the reproduction of their magnificent collection. The result is a beautiful book, divided into three sections dealing with the thorax, the abdomen and the skeleton respectively. The special techniques used to demonstrate various lesions are not neglected, and the individual pictures are accompanied by clinical and radiological thumbnail sketches which are models of conciseness and brevity. The publishers are as much to be congratulated as the authors on their presentation of this material.

The volume makes no attempt to be a textbook, but amply fulfils its declared intention of being an atlas. While probably its greatest usefulness will be to those principally concerned with paediatric radiology it will make an immediate appeal to paediatricians in general. For the wealth of material included, the book has been kept to a reasonable size, and for the price of 115 German marks it is very good value for the money. As it has been kept so pictorial, no great familiarity with the German language will be necessary for the English reader.

**The Pediatric Years.** By LOUIS SPEKTER. (Pp. xxv + 734; 21 figures. 90s.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications.

This book, by the director of the Bureau of Maternal and Child Hygiene of the Connecticut State Department of Health, is intended for professional workers 'in the fields associated with pediatric medicine'. The preface gives a list of 30 examples, including chiropodists, camp directors and sanitary engineers. For such a varied public, it is surely an impossible task to present technicalities at length in non-technical language equally understandable by all, and some sort of 'dictionary' would probably serve the purpose better. However, the author, expressing his indebtedness to a very long list of people, has composed a massive volume in six main sections. The first deals with maternal care and the next with normal growth and development in childhood. Next comes the longest part of the book which is virtually a textbook on diseases of children. Services available (in the U.S.A.) and standards are divided between two shorter sections and a final part describes 'pediatric procedures' and gives a glossary. As a work of reference to be used by non-medical workers the book is not without its dangers, although it has, of course, some value as a source of information of great variety between two covers and therefore easily obtained. Paediatrics in its widest sense has, however, grown too large to be contained adequately in this way.